

“The Power of Personal Invitations”

- Students at Greek Conference who attended the Lead Concentration spent part of their breakout session thinking about how to invite students involved with Greek Life at Creighton to a weekly gathering to talk about faith and spirituality. As the student leaders discussed and dissected different approaches to inviting people to participate in their events, they identified a few strategic best-practices. Hopefully these ideas will help as your student organization thinks about programming, too!

1) Make a network map

- Whenever you are inviting to an event or gathering, take time to assess your personal networks. Put your name in the middle of a piece of paper and draw a line outward for each category or area of your life (ie: a line for frisbee club, your fraternity, work study, your major, etc.). Then, draw additional lines as offshoots from each of those categories, this time writing the names of people who you know from each category at the end of those lines. Go back and highlight or circle the names of people you think should attend your event. These are the people you plan to personally invite!

2) Think through your reasoning

- Reasons for attending an event are varied and vast. As an inviter, being proactive about what those reasons might be will go far in seeing people respond to your invitations. After you've mapped out your networks and decided who you want to invite to your event, look through the list and think about why those specific people should attend your gathering and what you think they will get out of it. For example, has Joe been struggling with feeling like his fraternity is a right fit? Emphasize that your event will be a great opportunity to meet new people. Has Jane been feeling homesick? Emphasize that your event will be so fun she won't have time to think about what's making her sad. Is Jackie passionate about children? Emphasize that your event will help deepen her understanding of an important children's welfare issue. Taking the time to think about your audience and how your event relates to their lives will go a long way toward creating a compelling invitation and conveying how much you care that they are there!

3) Invite personally

- In a time when there are so many exciting and efficient ways to communicate your message or vision to large groups of people through social media, it is important to not neglect the power of the face to face invite. On a campus that is constantly buzzing with excellent activities, the onslaught of facebook events and reminder emails can

cause recipients to disengage. Rather than try a new gimmick to set your email apart, try a different approach. Think through when you naturally bump into the people on your invite list and make an intentional point to invite them to your gathering in person. People want to feel wanted, so regardless of whether or not they can attend, your invitation will likely be received warmly. If you know you won't cross paths with people before your event takes place, go the text route. Just make sure your text is personal enough and isn't an obvious copy/paste!